

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6284

As Passed Senate, February 12, 2008

Title: An act relating to the dairy products commission.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions relating to the dairy products commission.

Sponsors: Senators Schoesler and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/17/08 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/12/08, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Hatfield, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Jacobsen, Morton and Shin.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: The Dairy Products Commission has authority to administer programs to promote dairy products and conduct market research projects. The commission is funded by an assessment on milk products.

Ten members are currently on the commission including a dairy producer from each commission district, one dealer, one producer-dealer, and the Director of the Department of Agriculture. Members serve three year terms. Commission districts are created by rule to provide reasonably equal representation on the commission.

A process exists for dairy producers to nominate other dairy producers from their district to serve as a member of the commission. An advisory vote is held within the district and the two names of the candidates receiving the most votes are forwarded to the Director for potential appointment to the commission. If only one candidate is nominated for a position, the commission currently selects a second candidate to be forwarded to the Director.

Summary of Bill: The number of members on the commission is reduced from ten to nine through the deletion of the producer-dealer member. If only one person is nominated for a position on the commission, the requirement that the commission forward the name of a second candidate to the Director is deleted. The Director is provided with explicit authority to appoint or to reject a single nominee.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Vacancies that occur during the term of a member may be filled from a list of candidates forwarded by the commission to the Director. If only one name is forwarded, the Director has the discretion to appoint or reject the candidate and to request additional candidates.

Clarification is provided that producer members must be engaged as an owner or shareholder of the entity producing dairy products.

If a commission member has excessive absences or engages in dishonesty or willful misconduct, the commission is to recommend to the Director the removal of the member. If the Director finds that adequate cause exists, the member must be removed from the commission.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The number of producer-dealers has declined significantly to the point that it is hard to find anyone willing to serve as the producer-dealer member on the Dairy Products Commission. Additionally, if there was an interest in serving on the commission, the person could serve as either a producer or the dealer member. Prolonged periods of absence at commission meetings, due to competing time demands, have occurred and a procedure is needed to replace the non-attending member if the period of absence becomes excessive and hampers the operation of the commission.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Liz Anderson, Dairy Products Commission and dairy farmer; Jay Gordon, Washington State Dairy Federation.